



Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

27 April 2020

CERTIFIED MAIL
7019 2970 0001 5206 3220

Lisa Baker
Baker Farming
PO Box 9
El Nido, CA 95317

CERTIFIED MAIL
7019 2970 0001 5206 3213

Nick Caggiano, Regional VP
Synagro West LLC
3110 Gold Canal Drive, Suite E
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

NOTICE OF APPLICABILITY

WATER QUALITY ORDER 2004-0012-DWQ, GENERAL WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DISCHARGE OF BIOSOLIDS TO LAND FOR USE AS A SOIL AMENDMENT IN AGRICULTURAL, SILVICULTURAL, HORTICULTURAL, AND LAND RECLAMATION ACTIVITIES; SYNAGRO WEST, LLC AND BAKER FARMING; BAKER FARMING APPLICATION AREA; MERCED COUNTY

On 9 January 2020, Synagro West, LLC (Synagro) and Baker Farming (collectively Discharger) submitted a Notice of Intent (NOI) for coverage under the State Water Resources Control Board's Water Quality Order 2004-0012-DWQ, *General Waste Discharge Requirements for the Discharge of Biosolids to Land for Use as a Soil Amendment in Agricultural, Silvicultural, Horticultural, and Land Reclamation Activities* (General Order). According to the NOI, Synagro plans to apply biosolids from various wastewater treatment facilities in California to approximately 800 acres of farmland owned by Baker Farming (Baker Farming Application Area or Application Area). Additional information was received in subsequent submittals in March and April 2020.

Based on the information provided, this project meets the conditions for approval under the enclosed General Order. The discharge is hereby covered under enrollee number **2004-0012-DWQ-0026**. Please include this number on all correspondence related to this discharge.

PROJECT LOCATION

The Baker Farming Application Area is approximately 9 miles north-northeast of Dos Palos on the east side of Harmon Road, north of highway CA-152 and south of Washington Road in Merced County (Latitude 37° 04' 57" N, Longitude 120° 32' 35"W) as shown in Attachment A (Assessor's Parcel Numbers 074-160-046, 074-170-015, 074-150-003, 074-160-022, 074-150-006, 074-130-014, 074-170-014, and 074-160-036). The Application Area is within the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins. The San Joaquin River runs parallel to the Application Area, about three-quarters to one mile west of the site. The operative *Water Quality Control Plan for*

the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins (hereafter Basin Plan), designates beneficial uses, establishes narrative and numerical water quality objectives, and contains implementation programs and policies to achieve water quality objectives for all waters within the basin

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Synagro receives biosolids from various municipal wastewater treatment facilities (WWTF) within California (including Delta Diablo Sanitation District, San Francisco Public Commission's Oceanside Plant and South East Plant, Union Sanitation District, City of Burlingame, Daly City, City of Milbrae, Silicon Valley Clean Water, Calera Creek Water Recycling Plant, City of Stockton, City of Livermore, Fresno-Clovis Regional Wastewater Facility, and East Bay Municipal Utility District). Crops to be grown within the biosolids application area include wheat, corn, cotton, Sudan grass, and alfalfa. Nitrogen requirements for these crops range between 175 to 480 pounds per acre per year (Western Fertilizer Handbook).

Biosolids will be applied on Sites 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19 as shown in Attachment A. The biosolids will be applied and incorporated into the soil within 24 hours after biosolids delivery. Same-day biosolids storage and staging areas will be located within individual fields as needed. No same-day storage or staging will take place within buffers, adjacent to property lines, or adjacent to roadways.

In an emergency (e.g., equipment breakdown), the temporary offsite storage site will be utilized. The temporary offsite storage facility is located at 13757 S Harmon Road, Dos Palos (see Attachment A). In such an instance, the NOI states the Central Valley Water Board and the Environmental Health Department in Merced County will immediately be notified of the event.

According to the Fall 2018 depth data from the [California Information Center Interactive Map Application](https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/gicima/) (<https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/gicima/>) and data provided by the Discharger, the groundwater depth for the site is greater than 25 feet and, therefore, a groundwater monitoring program is not required.

Soils consist primarily of Fresno Loam and Pozo Clay. These soils are moderately well drained with a low water storage capacity. Soil sampling results provided with the NOI show the cation exchange capacities in the soils range from 27.4 to 46.3 meq/100g. Soil pH ranges from 6.62 to 7.44 standard pH units. The slope of the sites is less than 10%, so no erosion control plan is required.

The Discharger's site maps, submitted with the NOI, depict four offsite residences, two non-domestic wells, public roadways, and surface water features, all with appropriate set-back distances. The Discharger's site maps show buffer zones with setbacks of at least 500 feet for off-site residences, 100 feet from surface waters, 100 feet from non-domestic wells, and 50 feet from public roads. As required in Provision D.5. of the General Order, the Discharger has submitted proof that the appropriate agencies and persons were notified of the NOI.

MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

The General Order includes Monitoring and Reporting Program (MRP) 2004-0012-DWQ. MRP 2004-0012-DWQ requires submittal of an **annual monitoring report by 15th of February of each year** identifying the quantity of biosolids applied to the various fields and cumulative pollutant loading calculations for metals and nutrients. In addition, the General Order requires submittal of a preapplication report at least 30 days prior to the application of biosolids. A pre-application report was not submitted with the NOI.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

1. Application of biosolids at a location or in a manner different from that described in the NOI and this Notice of Applicability (NOA) is prohibited.
2. The application shall not cause or threaten to cause pollution as defined in California Water Code Section 13050
3. There shall be no discharge of biosolids or runoff from storage and/or application areas to adjacent land not regulated by this General Order, surface waters, or surface water drainage courses.
4. The staging in application of biosolids shall comply with all applicable setbacks contained in the General Order as specified in Discharge Specifications B.11.
5. Biosolids with less than 75% moisture content shall not be applied when surface winds speeds exceed 25 mph as determined by the nearest calibrated regional weather station (e.g., airport or CIMIS).
6. The application of Class "B" biosolids containing a moisture content of less than 50% is prohibited.
7. The application of biosolids to water saturated or frozen ground or during period of precipitation that induces runoff from the permitted site is prohibited.
8. Application of biosolids at rates in excess of the nitrogen requirements of the crops or at rates that would degrade groundwater quality is prohibited.
9. In accordance with the General Order's Monitoring and Reporting Program, the Discharger shall submit a **pre-application report at least 30 days prior to the application of biosolids**. In addition, the required annual monitoring report shall be submitted to this office **by 15 February of each year**.
10. The Discharger shall submit the required annual fee (as specified) in the annual billing statement issued by the State Water Resources Control Board until this NOA is officially terminated.

11. Failure to abide by the conditions of General Order 2004-0012-DWQ, including its monitoring and reporting requirements and this NOA could result in enforcement actions, as authorized by provisions of the California Water Code.

DOCUMENT SUBMITTALS

All monitoring reports and other correspondence should be converted to a searchable Portable Document Format (PDF) and submitted electronically. Documents that are less than 50 MB should be emailed to centralvalleyfresno@waterboards.ca.gov. Documents that are 50MB or larger should be transferred to a disk and mailed to the Central Valley Water Board office at 1685 E Street, Fresno, CA 93706. To ensure that your submittals are routed to the appropriate staff, the following information block should be included in any email used to transmit documents to this office:

Program: Non-15,
Place ID: 864733,
Place Name: Baker Farming Application Area,
Order: 2004-0012-DWQ-0026

All documents, including responses to inspections and written notifications, submitted to comply with this General Order shall be directed, via the paperless office system, to the Compliance and Enforcement Unit, attention to Russell Walls. Mr. Walls can be reached at (559) 488-4392 or russell.walls@waterboards.ca.gov. Questions regarding the permitting aspects of the General Order and notification for termination of coverage under the General Order, shall be directed, via the paperless office system, to the WDR Permitting Unit, attention to Jeff Robins.

Any person aggrieved by this action of the Central Valley Water Board may petition the State Water Resources Control Board to review the action in accordance with California Water Code section 13320 and California Code of Regulations, title 23, sections 2050 and following. The State Water Resources Control Board must receive the petition by 5:00 p.m., 30 days after the date of this NOA, except that if the thirtieth day following the date of this NOA falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or state holiday, the petition must be received by the State Water Resources Control Board by 5:00 p.m. on the next business day. [Copies of the law and regulations applicable to filing petitions](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/public_notices/petitions/water_quality) may be found on the internet (http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/public_notices/petitions/water_quality) or will be provided upon request.

Coverage for your Facility under the General Order shall become effective subject to this Notice of Applicability immediately.

Lisa Baker, Baker Farming
Nick Caggiano, Synagro West, LLC
Baker Farming Application Area
NOA 2014-0012-DWQ-0026

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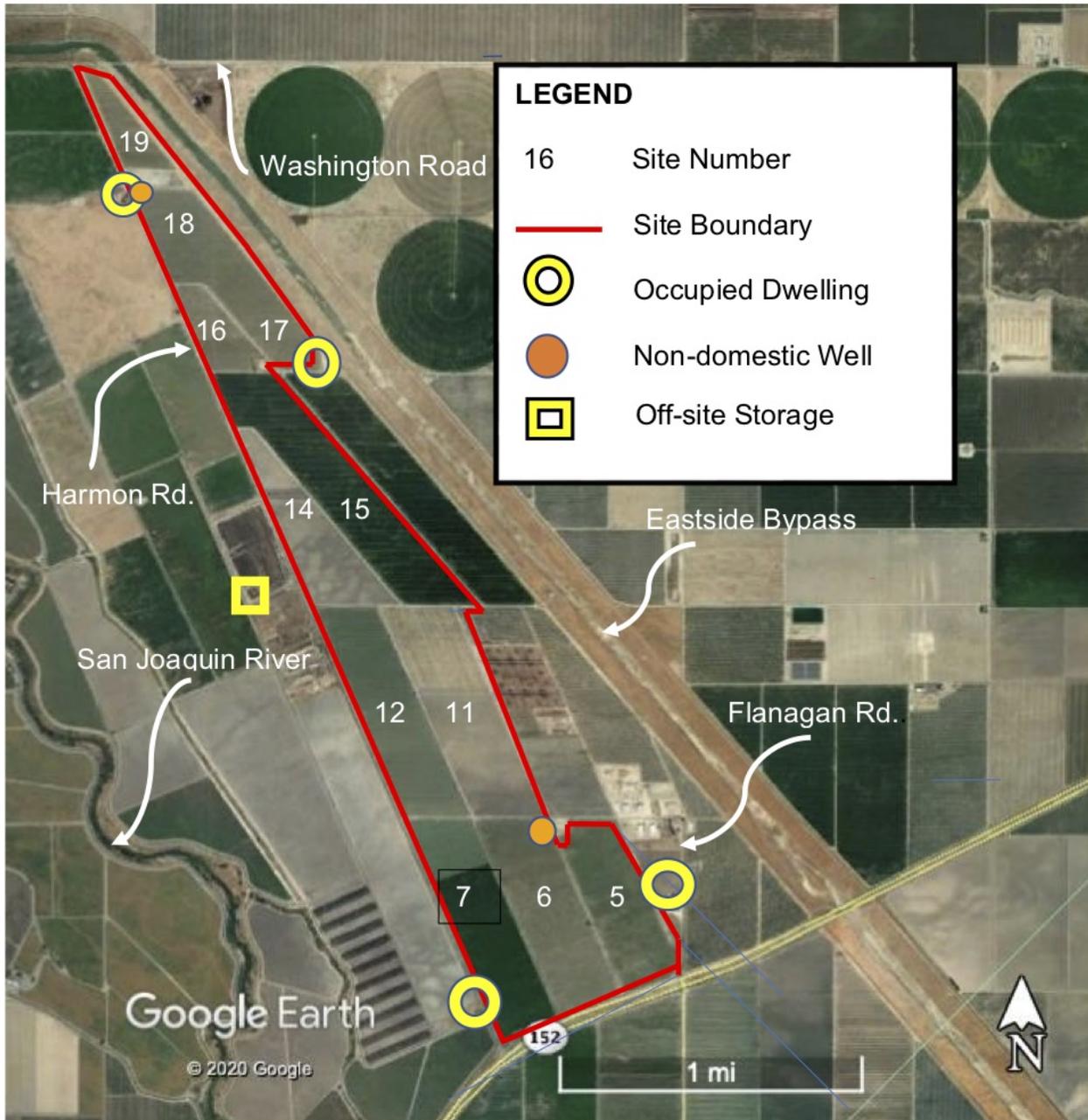
If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Jeff Robins by phone at (559) 445-5976 or by email at Jeff.Robins@waterboards.ca.gov

Original Signed by Clay L. Rodgers for:
Patrick Pulupa
Executive Officer

Attachments: Attachment A – Site Map

Enclosure: General Order 2004-0012-DWQ

cc w/o encl.: Laurel Warddrip, State Water Resources Control Board, Division of
Water Quality, Sacramento (Fresno)
Tricia Wathen, State Water Board, Division of Drinking Water, Fresno
(via email)
Russell Walls, Central Valley Water Board, Fresno (via email)
Ruth Darling, Central Valley Flood Protection Board (via email)
Merced County Environmental Health, Merced
Jose Valencia, Synagro West (via email)



ATTACHMENT A – SITE MAP
NOTICE OF APPLICABILITY 2004-0012-DWQ-0026
SYNAGRO WEST, LLC AND BAKER FARMING
BAKER FARMING APPLICATION AREA
MERCED COUNTY